

The P2 Corner

Compliance Assistance Centers

The network of environmental regulations can be confusing. Businesses that are good at the work they do, often feel lost when they try to understand environmental regulations. While there are many agencies (including the LLCHD) that are willing to take

time to help businesses understand these regulations, business owners might feel more comfortable talking with a nonregulatory group or to others in the same business. These are the founding principles of the Compliance Assistance Centers on the internet.



businesses reduce waste or hazardous materials on site. When the volumes of wastes and hazardous materials are reduced beyond threshold* levels, the business is in compliance with the regulations. Sometimes, if

* "Threshold" is the lowest allowed limit of a material or emission. If a business stores or emits above the threshold it probably would need to obtain a permit to continue operating or face a fine. The type of permit required is often determined by the volume of emissions. If a business operates below the threshold, it is in compliance. The business then might not need an operating permit or would be able to obtain a lower level permit.

These centers help businesses understand and comply with environmental regulations. Most of them help

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CREATING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

Environmental regulations are designed to protect human health and the environment. The first step is to identify the real risk posed by a substance or behaviors. The second step is to determine how to reduce or prevent that risk and whether a regulation is required.

Research

To identify a risk, various industries, universities, research centers conduct research. *Lab experiments* include dose/response tests. With many chemicals the level of reaction or response or the harm done is based on the dose or amount of exposure. A wide range of experiments will determine the actual effects of a chemical and compare them to the presumed effects.

Anecdotal studies involve studying people who suffer from a health problem to determine if it was caused by

an environmental exposure. Groups who were not exposed are also studied to compare results. From these studies, doctors can determine the likelihood of an effect (the potential risk) and the causes of certain health problems.



Long-range studies can be lab experiments or anecdotal studies conducted over a period of years. Low doses of chemical substances can build up in the human body over time. The lower, cumulative doses can have effects similar to a single

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CIGARETTE LITTER PREVENTION RESEARCH PROJECT ANNOUNCED

HARRY HEAFER, COORDINATOR OF KEEP LINCOLN & LANCASTER COUNTY BEAUTIFUL

Litter control is not just a matter of looks. Litter is pollution, and cigarette butts make up a large amount of the litter. Controlling litter improves the environmental health of a community. On June 22 Mayor Coleen J. Seng kicked off the Keep America Beautiful Cigarette Litter Prevention Research Program in downtown Lincoln.



“Cigarette litter is a problem in many communities, including Lincoln,” said Mayor Seng. “I support this research and am encouraged that the businesses and property owners in downtown Lincoln are participating in this project. We want our downtown to be attractive and clean.” Lincoln is one of nine cities across the United States selected to participate in this important research project.

A team of stakeholders—including the Downtown Lincoln Association, Downtown Neighborhood Association, Lincoln–Lancaster County Health Department, Urban Development, Planning Department, City Council, Keep Nebraska Beautiful, Citizen Information Center, and Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful (KLLCB) Advisory Committee—designed the project. A test campaign will assess the plan and allow the team to make any necessary revisions. The test campaign will be conducted through August 31 in the downtown Lincoln area.

Research conducted by Keep America Beautiful (KAB) has shown that much cigarette litter occurs in the *transition zone*—the area in front of a business just before a customer enters. Providing a cigarette receptacle that is relatively weatherproof can reduce the amount of cigarette litter on sidewalks. Three KAB affiliate communities that conducted research last year saw an approximate reduction of cigarette litter between 18–38% after receptacles were strategically placed.

In Lincoln, the targeted research area is O Street between 13th and 14th Streets and 14th Street between

O and P Streets. Cigarette butt receptacles have been installed there, and a public service message will be displayed on a billboard nearby. Public service spots will run several times a week on Channel 5, City TV, and in the *Lincoln Journal Star* throughout the campaign. About 3,000 pocket ash trays will also be distributed in the area. A post-scan survey will be conducted at the end of August to determine the outcomes of the effort.

Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful can provide information on several different designs of weatherproof cigarette receptacles. They can be contacted at 441-8035.

Keep Lincoln & Lancaster County Beautiful’s mission is to improve waste handling practices and increase environmental awareness through education and participation, and to keep Lincoln and Lancaster County litter free. KLLCB is partially funded by a grant from the Litter Reduction and Recycling Fund administered by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Keep America Beautiful, Inc., is a national, nonprofit public education and community improvement

organization whose network of more than 540 local, statewide and international programs educate individuals about litter prevention and ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and properly manage waste materials. Keep America Beautiful’s programs motivate millions of volunteers annually to clean up, beautify and improve their neighborhoods, creating safer and more



liveable community environments. For more information, visit www.kab.org.



COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE CENTERS

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businesses reduce volumes significantly, they might not need to obtain operating permits.

A wide range of compliance assistance centers can be found on the internet at <http://www.assistancecenters.net/>. This site includes links to industry-specific sites that provide examples, case studies, and suggestions from professionals in the business. Industry leaders provide tried and proven methods to reduce waste and reduce the volume of hazardous materials. The sites contain detailed information about tested alternative products and processes. Some of these sites include sections of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Many list contacts from whom local businesses can obtain industry-specific information and case studies.

Compliance with environmental regulations is one of the best ways to cut costs and reduce risk. The Compliance Assistance Centers provide excellent guidance on this and related topics.

Additional information can be obtained from the US EPA website (<http://www.epa.gov/>). This site contains links to subject-specific pages and to other agencies for more detailed information. The Paints and Coatings Resource Center web site includes excellent explanations of regulations, emissions, and related topics (<http://www.paintcenter.org/peg/pegnew.cfm>).



ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

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high dose. Long-range studies can prove that materials, once assumed to be safe, are dangerous. In some cases, these studies prove that the suspected material is not harmful.

The keys to each of these scientific methods are accurate record keeping and the use of a control group. A control group is made up of individuals who are not exposed to the chemical or material being studied. For example, in a study of asbestos, a control group would be people who were not exposed to asbestos fibers.

Regulation

Once research determines that a particular substance or behavior is harmful to human health or the environment, any one of a wide range of governmental agencies and nongovernmental groups can begin a process that will decide whether a regulation is needed. Environmental law is a complicated topic and enacting a law is a complicated process.



A member of congress proposes a bill. If both houses of Congress approve the bill, it goes to the President. If the President signs the bill it becomes an act. (See <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/lawintro.htm>.) After a bill becomes an act, an agency such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency writes a draft

regulation. Several agencies and individuals review and comment on this draft.

After the review period, the EPA will write a regulation that is printed in the Federal Register as a final rule. It becomes a code when it is published in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR). The CFR is divided into 50 volumes, each called a "title." Most of the environmental regulations are in *Title 40 CFR*.

The EPA authorizes agencies such as the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) to enforce regulations at the state level. These agencies in turn can authorize local agencies such as the Lincoln–Lancaster County Health Department (LLCHD) to enforce regulations. State and local agencies can create their own regulations too. State and local regulations must be at least as stringent as the federal regulations. They can be more restrictive based on local needs.

Through a process of scientific testing, public review, congressional and presidential action, the health and safety of the residents of the county are protected. The LLCHD is part of a network of agencies working to make sure that the environment remains clean and safe.



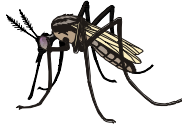
West Nile Virus and Waste Management

MOSQUITO CONTROL

LEON R. MARQUART

Inventory, raw materials, waste, and other materials stored on site for long periods should be checked for collected water. Water that has collected in containers on a business storage yard or industrial complex will suffice as a suitable location for mosquitoes to lay eggs. Mosquito breeding sites have been identified by LLCHD in glass, plastic, wood and metal containers. The composition of the container is not important. How long the container holds water is: one week is all that is needed to provide ample breeding opportunities. Prompt removal of by-products, recyclables and wastes reduce the likelihood of mosquito breeding.

During summer months, mosquitoes prefer to lay eggs in cooler, shaded areas. Materials stored for a long



period of time should be inspected for collected water. The north and east sides of buildings, trees, and large accumulations of materials create shade and protection to containers holding water within piles of tires, metal and waste products. These are ideal conditions for mosquito breeding. Materials that collect water and cannot be stored indoors may need to be treated to prevent mosquito breeding. Contact LLCHD for treatment options.

Keep vegetation mowed along fence lines, around equipment and material stockpiles. Weeds and volunteer trees provide protection from summer sun for mosquitos. Workers that disturb or are near these resting places will be at risk for mosquito bites. Anyone working outdoors where mosquitoes are known to be found should be encouraged to wear insect repellent.

HEALTH FACTS

CHERYL LOCKETT, RN

West Nile Virus is carried by birds or mosquitos. Humans most often are infected after being bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus. Most people who have been bitten do not get sick. Symptoms are usually mild and may include fever, headache, body aches, sore throat, fatigue, muscle weakness, or swollen glands with complete recovery.

In rare cases a person can experience more serious symptoms such as a rapid onset of high fever, confusion, tremors, stiff neck, paralysis, and swelling of the brain. Death is rare. *For more information about West Nile Virus call 441-8053.*



Prevention of mosquito bites is the best way to avoid WNV. Decrease mosquito breeding grounds by eliminating standing water that collects on your property. Change pet water dishes, bird baths and wading pools frequently. Wear loose, light colored clothing or stay inside if possible when mosquitos are biting. Use an insect repellent containing a DEET concentration of 30% or less. *For more information regarding mosquito control call 441-8022.*



Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

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<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/health/environ/pollu/>

The Ethic is published quarterly by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and is distributed to Special Waste Permit holders and other businesses in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

For more information or for P2 technical assistance, call 441-8040.

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The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department is participating in active surveillance for the disease by taking dead bird reports, trapping and testing mosquitos, and testing sentinel chicken flocks. *To report dead birds call Animal Control at 441-7900.* To properly dispose of a dead bird, reach inside a plastic bag, then pick up the bird and turn the sack inside out. Tie the sack closed and dispose of it in a garbage container. Wash your hands thoroughly.